Editorial

De Nardi , Sarah

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More than ever, in a world in which inequality, racism and xenophobia are on the rise, we, the archaeology and heritage professionals, enthusiasts, volunteers, advocates and activists, feel the urgency of a call to decolonize the practices that excavate, examine, narrate and shape the narratives of the past. Theoretical and procedural shifts emerge and evolve bringing us towards decolonization, intended not merely as a literal move to free up previously oppressed, enslaved and minority voices, but as the duty to create room for the primacy of indigenous and marginalized perspectives. The process of knowledge acquisition is leading the way to the more and more widespread practice of knowledge co-production and co-creation in cultural contexts which have suffered colonial abuse and social marginalization. To co-produce, to put locals first, is a fundamental first step towards equality or representation for our profession; this inclusion ethos may then create fairer futures drawing on fairer depictions and narratives of the (multiple) pasts.

Across contributions to the present issue of our Journal, we encounter numerous discussions and reflections on methods and implementations of the ethics of co-production as a strategy for symbolic and practical decolonization. Taken as a whole, the authors and reviewers writing in this issue take it in their stride to highlight the urgency of the decolonizing process applied to various contexts, geographical areas and remits of archaeological inquiry. 'Collaborating with the local community cultivates the idea of stewardship' writes Jakob Sedig (Harvard Medical School, USA). So, for instance, co-production takes the form of public engagement with local youths and other residents around Woodrow Ruin in New Mexico, in his research article. Reflecting on incorporating public engagement into his doctoral research, Sedig advocates that it is never too soon in one's developing academic career to start trying these inclusive and collaborative practices.

Maia Dedrick's (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA) contribution brings to the fore the indigenous creation of knowledge through photovoice, a process whereby she worked with local young people in an area of Yucatán, Mexico. They photographed places and things; then they came together using these photographs as prompts to spark discussion and debate and ultimately, as materialities that shape and refine research questions. Crucially, the process also highlighted the issues – heritage-related or not – that were most important to local people.

In his article, Paul A. Shackel (University of Maryland, USA) sensitively explores the issues related to a 'heritage of immigration' in the US Northeast. Ethnic Eastern and Southern Europeans settling in Northeastern Pennsylvania in the nineteenth century left a material culture that transcends the material itself, and imbues instead also the social and the mnemonic spheres. Understanding these 'heritages from elsewhere' serves to help build a culture of acceptance and inclusion of modern-day migration, too, and to understand these process as they repeat themselves over time.

If the whole world can be a museum, then the elitist shackles of accessibility to archaeological knowledge cease to exist. This is the premise of the paper by Ethan Watrall (Michigan State University, USA), who details the user-friendliness and ease of access, and digital social capital of the open source and multivocal mbira mobile application.

In their Field Report, Iain Banks, Eerika Koskinen-Koivisto and Oula Seitsonen (Universities of Glasgow, UK, Jyväskylä and Helsinki – both Finland – respectively) take us to the northern woodlands of Finnish Lapland, reporting on the community participation in a project investigating the material legacy which the Germans left behind during World War Two in the Sámi village of Inari. More than just 'a dig', the project involved local participants to delve deeper into the interactional and perceptual practices with which communities

near Inari understand the charred and buried remains of German military equipment and field hospital, and to capture why excavating them is important.

In his insightful review of Community Archaeology and Heritage in Africa, Decolonizing Practice edited by Schmidt and Pikirayi, Ibrahima Thiaw (University of Senegal) reflects on decolonizing archaeological practices across Africa, leading to his recommendation that 'religious freedom, social health and stability, community engagement is a key for enhanced cultural identity, interconnectedness, mitigation of cultural stress and reparative history'.

In our final book review, Blake Belanger (Kansas State University, USA) reviews The Future Has Other Plans: planning holistically to conserve natural and cultural heritage by Jonathan Kohl and Stephen McCool. He highlights the authors' criticism of contemporary heritage planning approaches, which despite the best intentions often fail to even reach implementation, much less reach into co-productive practices (despite widespread claims of 'participatory' processes). The book instead advocates for a more holistic approach to management and planning, one which 'humanizes', and truly brings community voices to the planning table.

Taken as a whole, these papers and contributions speak clearly to a need to integrate an awareness of race, ethnicity and the importance of the local into the very methodology that we devise and use. We need to share these best practices with students, colleagues and other collaborative partners, and to make them available to the community at large in an ever more powerful thrust against new racisms and ethnic violence at a global level. As those who handle, promote, shape and share archaeological, historical and heritage-related data and knowledge, we need to be vigilant to extremism and exclusion not just by publicly condemning these acts of epistemic and empirical violence but by preventing them in the first place. As most of us know too well, heritage does matter, and its power and influence reach far beyond the way it is sometimes depicted as merely a charming hobby for the privileged few.

A final note: as our journal and its mission of opening up and sharing co-production best practices grow and develop, we need our readers and allies to continue to engage, to share their own thoughts and practices with us. We have a dedicated occasional feature to this endeavour, Reflections articles. These are short pieces aimed personal reflections over one's own experiences, a critical evaluation or assessment of a case study (also possible as a Field Report depending on the discussion at hand), a trend, or even simply an observation on the current status of our field. If you have any ideas (even exploratory ones) about how we might publish more 'Reflections', please contact us at our journal's email address (communityarchaeologyjournal@gmail.com) or take a look at our guidelines at http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/YCAH-reflections.pdf.

Sarah De Nardi, Western Sydney University, Sydney, Australia. s.denardi@westernsydney.edu.au

Suzie Thomas, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

Carol McDavid, Rice University, Houston, USA